

Other important tips for safety

DO NOT HOLD YOUR BREATH WHEN LIFTING!! As a safety measure, exhale during the hard part of the lift (the “positive” phase) and inhale during the easy part (the “negative” phase).

KEEP YOUR KNEES SLIGHTLY BENT WHEN DOING A STANDING UPPER-BODY EXERCISE. This keeps your blood flowing to your brain – locking your knees could cause you to pass out.

ALWAYS LIFT WITH GOOD FORM! Form is critical in order to make the most of your workouts. Squeaking out two more reps with bad form isn’t going to make a positive difference in your training, but it will expose you to potential injury. It is far more desirable to lift fewer reps or a lighter weight with proper form (quality vs. quantity).

the negative phase of the lift should be done twice as long as the positive. you could do a 2-second : 4-second rep, or a ratio of 1 sec : 2 sec. Pause for a moment at the end of the positive phase. Controlling your lift this way forces your muscles to do the work, not gravity or momentum.

USE A SPOTTER IF YOU NEED TO. Again, don’t expose yourself to injury if you need assistance with a heavy weight. Utilizing a spotter can help you train better and make faster gains by helping you through sticking points. And they’re there to keep you from hurting yourself.

USE A WEIGHT BELT ONLY IF YOU’RE LIFTING HEAVY WEIGHTS THAT STRESS THE LOWER BACK. Wearing a belt at all times is unnecessary and can actually contribute to weaker back and abdominal muscles.

DRINK PLENTY OF WATER BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER YOUR WORKOUT.

Reverse crunches

Keep your torso on the ground and your feet up in the air, knees slightly bent. Lift your pelvis off the floor just slightly until you feel your abs contract. This exercise doesn’t require a huge leg thrust that lifts your entire lower back off the floor; a small squeeze will do.

